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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2209

February 15, 2008

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington D.C., 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

We write to encourage you to hold the government of Azerbaijan accountable for the recent vitriolic comments made by Azeri President Ilham Aliyev in regard to the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. It is important the United States condemn these comments that go directly against the United States stated policy in the South Caucasus region.

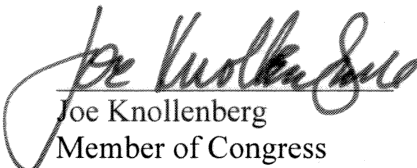
It was reported that during a meeting with his cabinet ministers President Ilham Aliyev stated, "In 2008 we will see, if the conflict could be solved by peaceful means, or not and after that we will make decisions" in regard to the ongoing conflict with Armenia over the status of Nagorno-Karabakh. President Aliyev went on to take pride in the fact that his government has completely isolated Armenia from regional projects and will continue to isolate them until "they voluntarily leave our territories." Furthermore, President Aliyev was quoted at the opening of a sports facility that "The war has not ended yet, it is just its first stage that has finished."

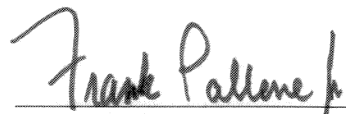
These fear tactics and threats of war go directly against the United States' goal of peace and stability in the South Caucasus region. Azerbaijan has been threatening war with Armenia for years. However, these recent public comments made by high-ranking government officials prove that their rhetoric has turned into a very real and dangerous threat.

Armenia continues to be a strong ally of the United States. They have supported our efforts in Iraq by sending Armenian troops to the country, they have expressed interest in sending troops to Afghanistan, and they continue to strive for peace with their neighbors. Furthermore, Armenia continues to advocate for a peaceful resolution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

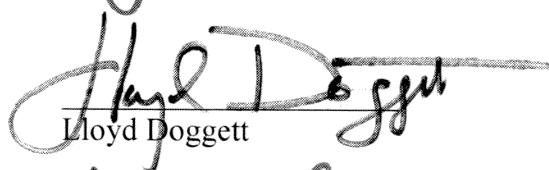
We implore you to challenge the Azeri government on their comments and ask that you advocate for a retraction of the comments made by President Aliyev.

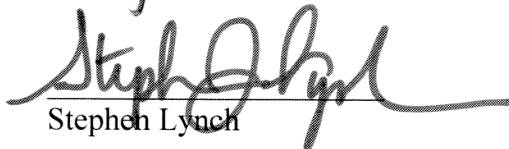
Sincerely,

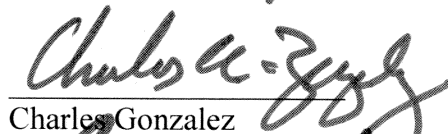

Joe Knollenberg
Member of Congress

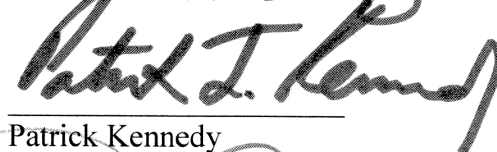

Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress

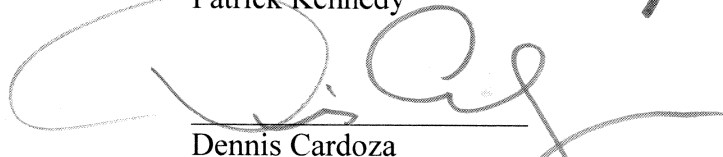

James Langevin

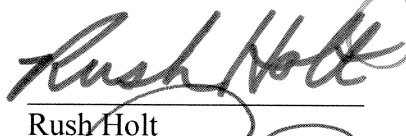

Lloyd Doggett


Stephen Lynch

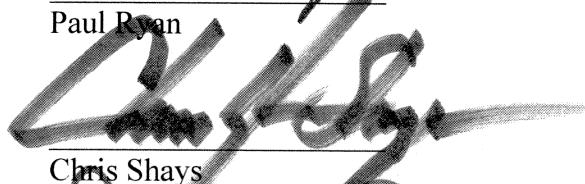

Charles Gonzalez

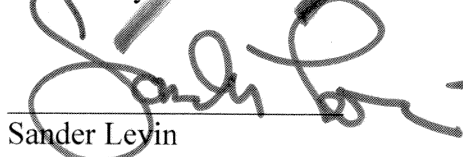

Patrick Kennedy



Dennis Cardoza

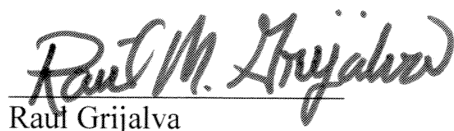

Rush Holt

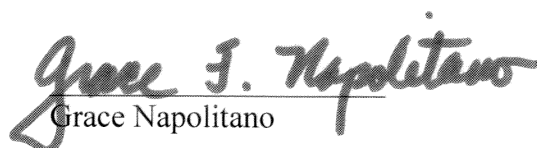

Paul Ryan

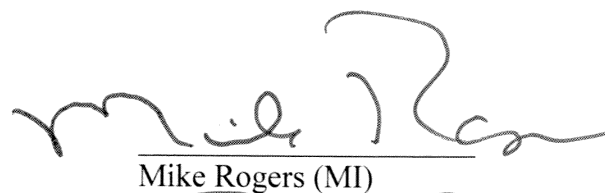

Chris Shays

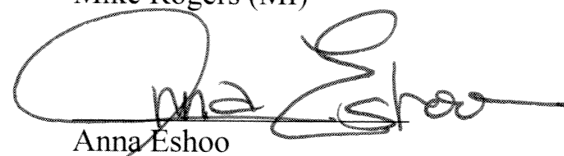

Sander Levin


Michael Honda



Raul Grijalva

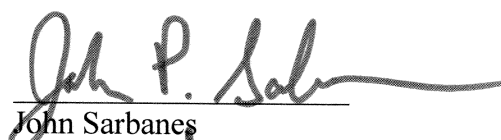

Grace Napolitano

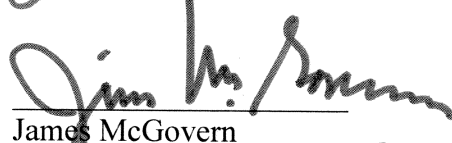

Mike Rogers (MI)

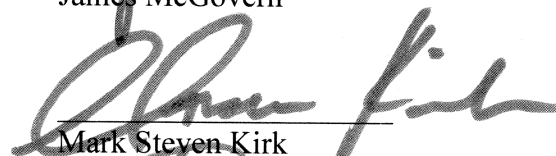

Anna Eshoo

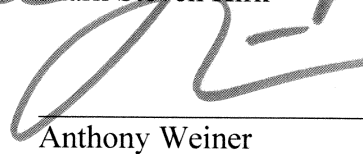

Candice Miller

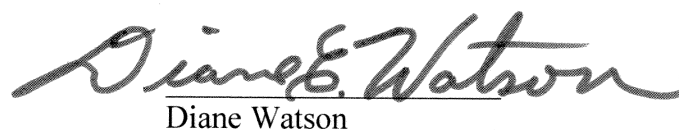

Adam Schiff

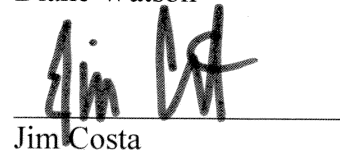

John Sarbanes


James McGovern

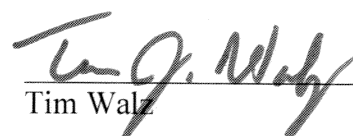

Mark Steven Kirk


Anthony Weiner


Diane Watson

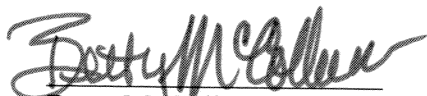

Jim Costa

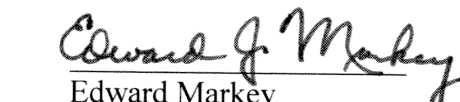

Scott Garrett



Tim Walz

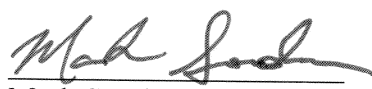

Gus Bilirakis

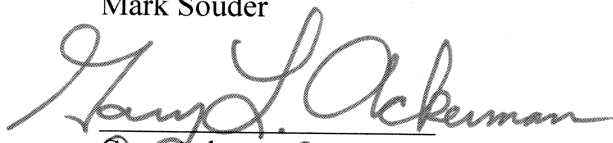

Thaddeus McCotter

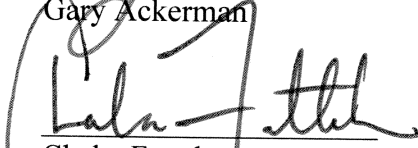

Betty McCollum

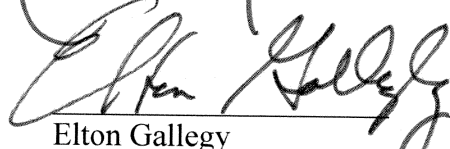

Edward Markey


Michael McNulty

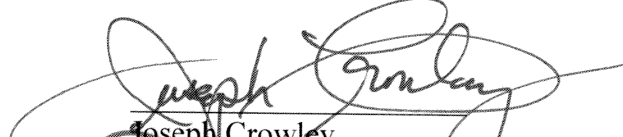

Mark Souder

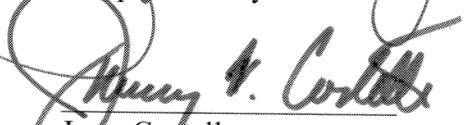

Gary Ackerman

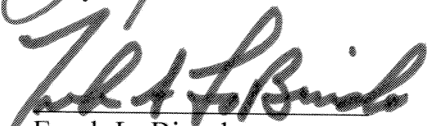

Chaka Fattah

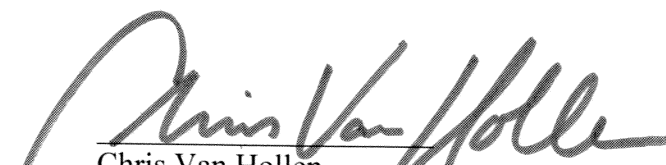

Elton Gallegly

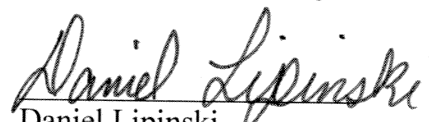

Howard "Buck" McKeon

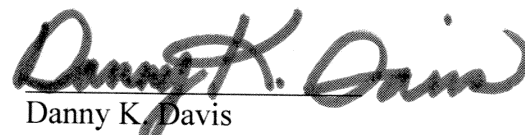

Joseph Crowley

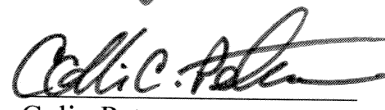

Jerry Costello

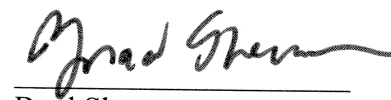

Frank LoBiondo


Chris Van Hollen

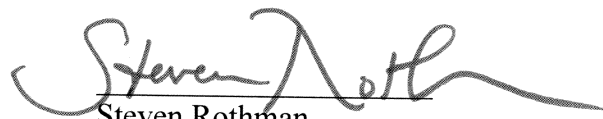

Daniel Lipinski

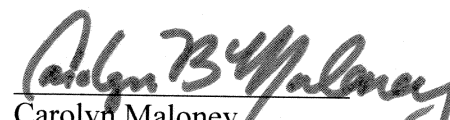

Danny K. Davis

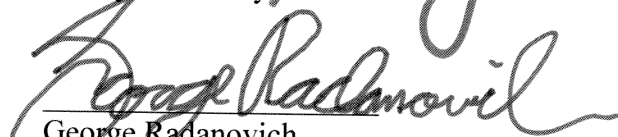

Colin Peterson

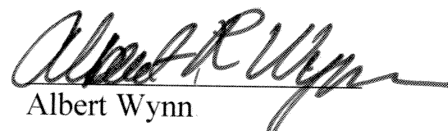

Brad Sherman

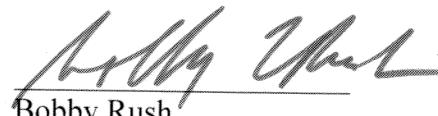

Barney Frank

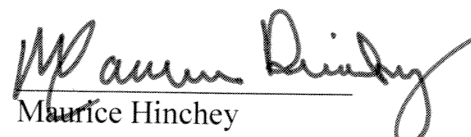

Steven Rothman


Carolyn Maloney


George Radanovich


Albert Wynn


Bobby Rush


Maurice Hinchey